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Front Page
Edt Page
Other Page

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The CIA's Place

In the backwash of the abortive Cuban landings the Central Intelligence Agency and the role it played are receiving much attention. This accent on our major "undercover" agency has raised disturbing questions in some European capitals. Editorials in British newspapers, for example, wonder how it was possible for a quasi-police group to play such a dominant role in foreign affairs.

It is apparent that the CIA had a

great deal to do with planning the operation, training some of the participants, and providing intelligence appraisals on which the whole undertaking was based. It would be unfortunate were our overseas friends to conclude from this that we are permitting CIA a central place in government appreciably comparable to that occupied by the secret police in the Soviet Union. That has not yet happened. It must not happen.

Overseas reaction underscores a vital point. We must guard against the delegation of too much responsibility to any federal intelligence agency. Even the necessities of the cold war should not lead us to grant irretrievable autonomy to any bureau which must work in the shadows. The CIA has its place, but it must take a back seat when the time comes to formulate top-level policy.

The above editorial also appeared in the following other newspapers:

MANSFIELD NEWS JOURNAL, OHIO	- MAY 10, 1961
HANNIBAL COURIER POST, MO.	- MAY 6, 1961
ST. CLOUD TIMES, MINN.	- MAY 6, 1961
WATERTOWN TIMES, WISC.	- MAY 6, 1961
ASBURY PARK PRESS, N.J.	- MAY 6, 1961